Negotiating Space and Space of Negotiation: Consuming Spaces in the Urban Kampong

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Abstract

The understanding of place cannot be undertaken without major theoretical endeavor. To know something as apparently simple as the social relations of place and its consumption is to have to engage with a sophisticated array of social theorizing. Built environment (space) will be naturally transformed into a place by desirable quality of human intervention: people permeate it with life and spirit of place.

Space is a material product, in relation with other material elements – among others, men, who themselves enter into particular social relations, which give to space a form, a function, a social signification. (Castells,1979: p.115). It is emphasized by Lefebvre proposition about (social) space is a (social) product (Lefebvre, 2007, p.26). Therefore, it is relevant to analyze urban space and its architecture as the spatial products of the socio-cultural representation. Meanwhile, Habraken mentioned that intimate and unceasing interaction between people and the forms they inhabit uniquely defines built environment (Habraken, 2000). In addition, Habraken argued that built environment is universally organized by the Orders of Form, Place, and Understanding. These three fundamental, interwoven principles correspond roughly to physical, biological, and social domain.

For those grounds, this paper is an attempt to develop theoretical understanding about production and consumption of social space on the basis of everyday life spatial practices in the domestic setting of Urban Kampong settlement.

Keywords: *Production of Space, Consumption of Space, Social Space, Negotiating Space*

a. Understanding Spatial Order in the City as Organism and the City as Interwoven Urban Fabrics

In view of the fact that humans are expert classifiers and categorizers (Humphrey, 1984: p. 143), the world around us, as created and lived, may be divided up and made sense of in many different ways. Often very complex system of classification may derive from simple principles, as social anthropologists have found in studying traditional small-scale societies. Through classification, order is imposed upon the world, not simply an ordering of everything in its place, but an order of social relations, space and time. One of the most important generators of these ordering principles is the human body. We move through space and time; we experience our surroundings through our bodies and, by our mere presence, , impose a schema on space whether we are aware of it or not. In addition,, the body can also represent any bounded system (like a house, a territory, a group). The body is a complex structure. The functions of its different parts and their relation afford a source of symbols for other complex structures. Considering city as the complex structure at this point of view leads us to the analogical concept of the city as organism.

Other organizing principles may be derived from our environments. The concentric structuring of space into a centre and periphery (or a set of concentric zones) and diametric organization according to one or more axes (such as the four cardinal directions) are also common elements of an underlying system of rules or conventions. Though the imposition and articulatio of these underlying principles, humans create order (cosmos) out of the primeval disorder (chaos) (Lévi-Strauss 1963: p.132). The characteristic that distinguishes a traditional society is order, the sense of coherence in every aspect of life. This order derives from a shared knowledge of origins and gives validity to every event. In traditional society the creation myth normally serves as the basis for organization of society, territory, dwelling and family.

In addition, according to Habraken (2000), built environment, in all of its complexity, is created by people. Built environments have lives in their own: they grow, renew themselves, and endure for millennia. In growing and changing through time, the built environment resembles an organism more than an artifact. Yet, while ever-changing, it does possess qualities that transcend time. Identities of buildings and cities persist for millennia. Despite transformation, they represent value shared with

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ancestors and passed down to descendants, uniting past and future. Similar continuity exists in public spaces – streets, boulevards, squares, and neighborhoods – and even in details, in the way a doorway or window is crafted, or how a room is laid out.

In short, the very durability and transcendence of built environment is possible only because there is continuous change. In this respect, built environment is indeed *organic*: continuous renewal and replacement of individual cells preserves it, giving it the ability to persist. At this point, change and renewal are the keys to our knowledge of the built environment.

In consequence, the built environment comprises not only physical forms – buildings, streets, and infrastructure – but also the people acting on them. If the built environment (or the city) is an organism, it is so by desirable quality of human intervention: people permeate it with life and spirit of place. As long as they are actively involved and find a given built environment worth renewing, altering, and expanding, it endures. When they leave off, the environment dies and crumbles.

The intimate and unceasing interaction between people and the forms they inhabit is a fundamental and fascinating aspect of built environment. We are all players: agents who inhabit the environment, transforming it to our liking and making sure things stay as we choose, within the territory we claim. Few are passive. Office workers arrange flowers, adjust picture frames and books, set down a cup of coffee; students hang posters on the wall. Such humble impulses of inhabitation lead to maintaining and adapting building forms, and ultimately to erecting, demolishing, or replacing buildings and settlements.

However, the capacity to reinterpret and change meanings of space is constrained by already existing spatial order (Moore, 1986: p.186). The relationship between spatial form and human agency is mediated by meaning. People actively give their physical environments meanings, and then act upon those meaning. In other word they consume space and in turn produce a new space based on their spatial interpretation. This is the relationship between consumption and production of space in the spatial transformation process.

Understanding spatial order in the city as interwoven fabrics brings us to the basic building skill: art of weaving. Weaving is one of the most ancient human arts, predating architecture as a cornerstone of civilization. The relationship between the craft of weaving and the art of building was elaborated by Gottfried Semper in both *The Four Elements of Architecture and The Textile Art*. A primordial art as it were. It alone generates its types from itself or from analogies in nature; all other arts, including architecture, borrow from types this art.

Semper sees two distinct aspects in the relationship between textiles and architecture: one spatial and the other tectonic.[1] He asserts that the definition and enclosure of space by walls can be traced to the use of fabrics attached to a frame in primitive shelters, while the link between techniques of connection employed in textiles and weaving and the material connection of buildings was even more influential in the development of the architectural style.

Philosophers as chronologically and ideologically remote as Plato and Gilles Deleuze have employed analogies based on the weaving of fabric. Plato uses the idea of weaving to describe the science of governing, while more recently Deleuze and Felix Guattari[2] elaborate the specific characteristics of woven fabric, pressed felt, and patchwork quilting quilting to describe their contrasting spatial paradigms of "the smooth and the striated." Woven fabric is seen to represent a space that is striated and etched with institutional patterns that limit freedom while the collage-like quilt offers a closer approximation of the "smooth" space of the nomad. The hierarchies and patterns of fabric that for Deleuze provide an impediment to the free movement of thoughts are the same structures that might be seen to promote physical connection within the city as fabric while the ruptures and discontinuities of the quilt would seem to recall the idea of the city as collage. The appropriation of any metaphor in the end requires an interpretation of the fundamental nature of condition described. This returns us to Semper for whom the various forms of textile served as a way of demonstrating his theory regarding the relationship between materials and their assembly.

In general, according to Gottfried Semper, we use the term tectonics to indicate a skill of constructing or making something from light materials rather than heavy materials (stone, clay), which Semper classifies as stereotomic. Constructing here includes activities such as weaving, knitting, and braiding of light materials such as grass, rattan, rope, yarn, cloth, fibers, and so forth. Braiding, knitting and weaving are activities rooted in culture. If Abbe Laughier presented the idea of primitive hut as the first dwellings, then Semper (as quoted by Aaron Betsky in *Building Sex*, 1995), suggests that the tent was the first human dwelling. Study into its ethnology

[1] Gottfried Semper, "The Textile Art," in *The Four Elements of Architecture and other Writings*, trans. Harry Francis Mallgrave and Wolfgang Hermann (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989)

[2] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* ,Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987: p. 474

support the proposition that the first human dwellings were made by braiding and weaving of twig and then yarn to make tents, which was done by both men and women, when humans were still nomadic.

b. Production of Social Space: Weaving Spatial Practices of Everyday Life in the Domestic Settings of Kampong

We can still see braiding and weaving in many vernaculars architectural works the world over, including in Indonesia. Walls, floors and roofs of Indonesian architecture are a product of weaving natural locally available materials: palm fiber, coarse grass, rattan and so on; something not far removed from craft product such as mats, food containers, steamers, baskets, and other household goods (Mahatmanto,1999). Therefore, we can say that weaving as a life skill plays significant roles in the production of space.

In *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre argues that space is continuously produced through various human actions and undertakings. Adhering to a Marxist tradition of thinking, Lefebvre tends to favor the concept of production ('production of space') at the expense of consumption. In addition, space is not only produced; it is equally consumed or becoming a space of consumption. Consumption is always spatial: it is based on the spatial-aesthetic arrangement, associations, and display of commodities in social space.

Lefebvre argues that "social space is produced and reproduced in connection with the forces of production (and with the relations of production). These forces are not taking over a pre-existing, empty or neutral space or a space determined solely by geography, climate, and anthropology.

In Lefebvre's hands, space becomes re-described not as a dead, inert thing or object, but as organic and fluid and alive; it flows and collides with other spaces. And these interpenetrations – many with different temporalities – get superimposed upon one another to create a *present* space. Each present space is 'the outcome of a process with many aspects and many contributing currents' (Lefebvre, 2007, p.110). So space (urban space, social space, physical space, experiential space) is not just the staging of reproductive requirements. But, it is a vital and an active moment in expansion and reproduction of capitalism.

Focusing on social space, Lefebvre also argues that space is not an inert, neutral, and a pre-existing given, but rather, an on-going production of spatial relations. He writes: "social space is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products: rather, it subsumes things produced and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity—their (relative) order and/or (relative) disorder" (Lefebvre, 2007: p.73).

Spatial practice is empirically observable. It is the readable/visible space. Hearing plays a decisive role in perceived space, but also eyes. Like all social practice, spatial practice is lived directly before it is conceptualized. Social and spatial practice is "reality". A spatial practice must have a certain cohesiveness, but this does not imply that it is coherent (in the sense of intellectually worked out or logically conceived). The specific spatial competence and performance of every society member can only be evaluated empirically.

Spatial practice is the practice and the way which space is appropriated. The way space is dominated. Including the way the body is appropriated or dominated. Spatial practice embraces production and reproduction. In spatial practice the reproduction of social relations is predominant. Under neo-capitalism it embodies a close association, within perceived space, between daily reality (daily routine) and urban reality (the routes and networks which link up the places set aside for work, "private" life and leisure). This association is a paradoxical one, because it includes the most extreme separation between the places it links together. "Modern" spatial practice might thus be defined - to take an extreme but significant case - by the daily life of a tenant in a government-subsidized high-rise housing project. Users and inhabitants are marginalized by spatial practice to the extent that we lack well-defined terms.

For those grounds, in turn, production of social space in the domestic setting of urban Kampong could be understood as the representation of interwoven spatial practices which expressed social interaction amongst the kampong inhabitants.

c. Negotiating and Consuming Space: Spatial Occupation and Control on Territory in the Urban Kampong

Rapoport (1969: p.47) defined that buildings and settlements are the visible expression of the relative importance attached to different aspects of life and the varying ways of perceiving reality. The house, the village, the town and the city express the fact that societies share certain generally accepted goals and life values. The form of vernacular buildings is less the aims and desires of the unified group for an ideal environment. They therefore have symbolic values, since symbols serve a culture by making concrete its ideas and feelings. At the same

time, house forms, more than other artifacts, are influenced and modified by climate forces, choice of site, and availability and choice of materials and construction techniques.

Settlement form, usually referred to by the term "physical environment," is normally taken to be the spatial pattern of the large, inert, permanent physical objects in a city.[3] The very act of inhabitation – of occupying a space and selecting what comes in and what stay out – is fundamentally territorial. Territory will thus be recognized as space into which only certain items may enter. The ability to move material things across borders is the ultimate test of territorial control.

Control of form is a matter of transformation of form. But control of space cannot simply imply transformation of space: to transform space requires acting on the material parts that make that space. This is in turn means transforming a material configuration – that is controlling form. Yet control of space is clearly distinct from control of form[4]. Control of space denotes the ability to defend that space against unwanted intrusion.

According to Habraken (2007), space under control is territorial, and distinguishing such territory is fundamental to inhabiting the earth. Territorial control is the ability to close a space, to restrict entry. It is perhaps the most instinctive way by which humans have learned to understand built environment (and also, much earlier, natural landscape). In turn, the built environment could be defined as a territorial organization, as a space under the control of agents. Territory is also defined by acts of occupation. A corresponding space formed by physical parts is not required for territorial space to exist. All that is needed is an agent exercising spatial control.

Temporary occupation of public space is common; for commercial uses, it is universal. Pedestrian pathways occupation varies from placing discreet signs to indicate restaurant entrances, to creating street vendors or to actually displaying wares in front of a shop window. Thus built form may suggest territory, but it is ongoing act of occupation that fixes the actual event of the claim. In the examples mentioned before sidewalk control forms *a margin*, a zone within which the boundary may move (Habraken, 2007). The actual territorial boundary is indicated not by the building but by lower-level configuration and parts. The shop, for instance, leaves part of the sidewalk free for passage and positions its boundary somewhere between building and road as determined by custom, practical use, and occasional negotiation.

The spatial hierarchy characterizing street networks on the urban level is clearly distinct from its remarkably flat territorial structure. Urban space exhibits pronounced hierarchy. On the other hand, clear street and neighborhood territories that have no formal indication are establish throughout the built environment: it is simply understood that neighborhoods or even driveways are not entered without express permission from inhabitants. In the case of traditional neighborhood (urban Kampong settlement) in Jogjakarta, Indonesia, that phenomenon is quite similar, even though in Jogjakarta, the degree of "openness" of the territorial space is differed based on the social cohesion of the inhabitants. For the community who still has a strong social cohesion amongst its members the degree of the "openness" is higher than the groups of mixed inhabitants (commonly this mixed groups consist of more modern societies). At this point we could see the intervention of modernization process in the socio-spatial cohesion of the traditional neighborhood influences the shifting of territorial claim on the urban spaces.

Study on spatial transformation in the domestic settings of Urban Kampong in Jogjakarta shows the different capacities were determined by differentiation in time, space, and social groups. At this point, transformation process of the neighborhood configuration is characterized by the changing spatial usage (negotiating space) of the residential houses alongside the street/public space from residential function to the commercial (space of negotiation) facility (small shops, offices). Meanwhile, in the inner backside of the neighborhood area, semi public spaces are still alive with the social activities upon them.

Fluidity and flexibility of the spatial structure in urban kampongs of Jogjakarta could be easily adjusted as an open framework for modern infiltration. Spatial changes both in the domestic domain and urban structure commonly were driven by politic and economic reasons in order to increase the socio-economic values of the space. However, indigenous culture of dwelling of individual and group of people could still spatial practices in between of everyday life. It convinces the well-built interwoven between people – space – culture onto social space.

d. Conclusion

Current global influences to the urban situation could be considered positively as the rapid changing of urban life caused by modernization in order to improve the quality of everyday life in the

[3] Kevin Lynch, Good City Form, The MIT Press 1984: p.47

[4] N.J.Habraken, *The Structure of the Ordinary*, MIT Press 2000: p.126

[5] Sri Wuryanto, Gregorius, *Production of Space in the Urban Transformation Process: Case Study Jogjakarta,* Master Thesis 2008

modern life system. Nevertheless, it also could be criticallyconcerned in term of weakening social integration of different social groups since modernization also brings marginalization onto socio-spatial structure along with its tough competition. Survival ways of the marginalized groups are being supported by their social and cultural capital instead of their lack in economic capital. In the urban Kampong settlement, networking between these social groups still has a strong structure due to cultural background of the society in order to nurture local culture as the economic – social – cultural capital. Actually between these social groups there is interdependency that could be improved to bridging the socio-economic gap towards a mutual social cohesion and integration. In turn, production of social space and spatial negotiation in the Kampong settlement represents the dynamics of social cohesion amongwho are actively negotiating in consuming and controlling social space.

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